



**Virginia Indian Advisory Board
Recognition Workgroup
Meeting Minutes**

Date: Thursday, September 22, 2022

Time: 6:00pm-8:00pm

Location: Virtual – Teams

Committee Members Present:

**Buck Woodard
Brad Hatch
Pam Ross
Greg Smithers
Jean Kelley**

Committee Members Absent:

None

Non-Members in Attendance:

**Chief Terry Price
Gary Price
Annette Price
Erik Conyers
Pamela D'Angelo
Brandon Custalow
Bill Hurd
Gregg Kimball
Julie Langan**

Committee Business:

- **Old Business**
 - **Approval of August 25 minutes.**
 - **Pam moves to accept minutes. Jean seconds. Motion passes.**
 - **Communication with petitioner, letters of 8/31/22 and 9/12/22.**
 - **Buck: two letters came through from the petitioner since our last meeting, via email to Secretary's office. Requested that petitioner add a folder to the Google Drive called "correspondence" so that we can all keep track. Summary of 8/31 letter, addressing questions workgroup had on Criterion #1. Specifically, copies of treaties. Asked for clarification of citing Dr. Smither's book and their inclusion of the Virginia Horizons textbook. Summary of the 9/12 letter next. That letter provided an outline of new materials added to satisfy Criterion**



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#1 and provided a new textbook from 2011, approved by DOE.

Petitioner submitted a chapter from this book as evidence, as well as maps, but mostly secondary sources. Also, requested meeting with workgroup to discuss status of the petition.

- **Pam: lots of information on the Google Drive and some is documentation already in the petition. Google Drive makes for messy process, may be an observation for moving forward with next petitioner.**
- **Buck: agrees we should make recommendations about process to VIAB.**
- **Greg: Agrees with Pam about degree of duplication.**

○ **Progress on Criterion #4 and LVA.**

- **Jean: Specific tax lists she is looking for are physically at LOV, and she couldn't get there. Has been looking extensively at online resources and databases for genealogy.**
- **Buck: Is early October genealogy report still possible?**
- **Jean: Yes, but wants to know the format of reports.**
- **Buck: Let's revisit the formatting issue a little later tonight when we talk to VIAB about the format.**

- **New Business**

○ **Review of new materials submitted to satisfy Criterion #1.**

- **Buck: Reads criterion, summarizes document types/examples of evidence. We requested original documents and looking at more archaeology related to Cherokee sites.**
- **Brad: Would have liked narrative, but additional archaeological evidence is thorough and good.**
- **Buck: Petitioner submitted a narrative but one that addresses other criteria also. There is a list of archaeological sources and what to look for in those sources, but petitioner is at a deficit by not having an archaeologist/anthropologist/etc. to organize the petition for them.**
- **Greg: echoes some of Brad's concerns about organization and lack of narrative to provide context.**
- **Buck: task of Criterion 1 is to show the group was in Virginia at time of first contact with Europeans.**
- **Greg: two different things to show Cherokee are in Virginia vs. petitioner's ancestors were in Virginia and they don't necessarily support one another.**
- **Pam: current schoolbook text provided is more supportive than the previous one and it is currently being taught in schools.**
- **Greg: This is a 4th grade textbook that has been widely criticized by historians by how loose it plays with facts. This textbook is problematic and it was not written by a historian. Didn't read this as**



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a serious piece of evidence that advanced the narrative from a historical perspective. This portion of Virginia was a borderland zone where Cherokee people hunted seasonally but did not have towns.

- Buck: petitioner acknowledges that the textbook isn't the most voracious evidence, but Virginia agencies have approved it. Archaeological evidence suggested Cherokee ancestors, but not necessarily post contact Cherokee.
- Brad: The archaeology points to Cherokee traits, but not an exact match for Cherokee towns. Did these people identify as Cherokee? Trade and exchange, as well as influence in the area is pretty clear. But, Cherokee identity is less clear. A narrative marshalling this information and using it to make an argument about Cherokee presence would be useful, rather than us having to debate.
- Greg: underscores the importance of trade networks, and possibly captive people as source of archaeological traits. Did these people understand themselves to be Cherokee? Up into the 18th century people identified more with town or clan than broader Cherokee identity. Evidence suggests vast networks of exchange beginning from early on.
- Buck: Agrees that these trade networks are really important as well as mobility. Pisgah and Qualla were found at some of these sites, both found at Cherokee sites elsewhere.
- Greg: treaties and use of buffer zones are important to understand here in this part of Virginia.
- Buck: Discussion of Rickohockens, and thoughts that they were Cherokee has been firmly disproven in the last 10-15 years. The people were from the eastern Great Lakes and were heading south.
- Greg: The Rickohockens as Cherokee is completely wrong.
- Review of new materials submitted to satisfy Criterion #2.
 - Buck: reads Criterion #2 and summarizes potential evidence. Is it Cherokee identity or Indian identity? What is the time period? Submitted evidence of social interaction in the region at least for last three decades. We requested they add evidence from the Miller applications from 1906. They have included letters from Patawomeck and Cheroenhaka chiefs, consulted with members of other Virginia tribes for support.
 - Greg: evidence presented here some of the most positive in favor of petitioner. Over last two or three decades members of the petitioner's group have played a positive role in Virginia Indian community and been accepted. How far do we go back?
 - Buck: some letters of support come from local, federal, and state agencies and native identity crosses community lines.



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- **Pam:** Is there an amended narrative for this criterion?
- **Buck:** a larger narrative summary, but not just for this criterion. This criterion is challenging because it's self-identity over time. Difficult because identity is so fluid and context based.
- **Brad:** echoes Greg's comments. Appreciates the recommendation letters and Miller applications, but there is still a gap between the early 1900s and the late 20th century. Getting back to early 1900's isn't bad for Virginia.
- **Buck:** the problem with state recognition has been gatekeeping on the end of scholars reviewing the petition and there have been few scholars advocating for petitioners.
- **Review of new materials submitted to satisfy Criterion #3.**
 - **Buck:** reads criterion and summarizes types of evidence that could potentially be used. Not a large amount of new information to satisfy this. But, we all agreed that this one was a hard one to pass without land maintenance.
 - **Greg:** didn't see anything really new.
 - **Buck:** summarizes our previous comments on Criterion 3. Primarily, creating a historical narrative.
 - **Jean:** agrees with Greg, really nothing new.
 - **Buck:** discussion of moving across state lines for work, migrating in mass to NW coast and coming back.
 - **Brad:** place-based narrative? Was there a constant connection to Virginia, did anybody stay behind?
 - **Buck:** didn't get enough evidence to change the workgroup's opinion on this criterion.
- **Request for a meeting with Wolf Creek Petitioner and Counsel to review status.**
 - **Buck:** may need to ask Secretary's office if we can have an executive session. Is this supposed to be more of a technical assistance meeting? VCI was formerly able to go into executive sessions.
 - **Pam:** what is the specific ask here? What does the petitioner want that we haven't already provided since we don't meet privately.
 - **Buck:** Outlined in 9/12 letter.
 - **Jean:** this is late in the process since we are already working up our final reports.
 - **Buck:** I don't think we can offer anything different than what we have already offered, but they are exercising their right. Asks Jean to talk about technical assistance for the group in a federal recognition context.



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- **Jean:** discusses technical assistance in a federal petition sense. Areas where petition is weak and what type of evidence would be needed to meet the criteria.
- **Pam:** this is similar to what has been done thus far in our letters to the petitioner.
- **Greg:** seems like we have been doing that already. But, happy to do it again.
- **VIAB discussion of preferred format for report and presentation.**
 - **Brandon Custalow:** Understanding that we cannot go into executive session unless there is a personnel or legal issue. No mention of technical assistance in process, but meeting should just be about progress. Procedures require written report 30 days before VIAB meets to discuss. VIAB is looking for review of criteria, recommendations, and documentation in appendix or citations. Also, oral presentation required. Workgroup should be present at oral presentation and a spokesperson is chosen to give it, but they ask for a powerpoint. Summary of written report in presentation with recommendation. Should be prepared for questions from VIAB during presentation. Drop dead date is November 26, 2022 for report to be provided to the VIAB.
 - **Buck:** Format of report writing?
 - **Brandon Custalow:** If workgroup does not recommend, they need to explicitly state why.
 - **Jean:** We should have report for each criterion, but can we collaborate and pass drafts around?
 - **Buck:** asks Greg about being the lead on a section that relies heavily on history.
 - **Greg:** No problem being lead on one, but addressing the criteria as outlined is important.
 - **Buck:** an article length manuscript should be good for the report.
 - **Jean:** do we save the powerpoint for exhibits?
 - **Buck:** almost every slide will need to have an exhibit or illustration. We may need clarity on how we communicate within the workgroup for this.
 - **Brad:** should we do something similar to what we have done, but have the focus be whether the criteria are met with supporting evidence for or against? Do we make an overall recommendation at the end? We should get working on Criteria 1-3 now, though.
 - **Buck:** we do make an overall recommendation, but it would be good to preserve our individual opinions/identity.
 - **Greg:** something that indicates the workgroup voted 4-1 in favor, for example, and the one who voted otherwise can write a dissenting



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opinion if they want. Do this for each criterion and for the overall recommendation.

- **Buck:** Asks Brad to handle editing Criterion 1, suggests he do Criterion 2, and asks Greg to do Criterion 3. Each group member should write a page or less on each criterion and circulate to the group.

- Public comment

- **Annette Price:** Can we still make changes to 4, 5, and 6?
- **Buck:** no deadline set, but can ask for an extension. Suggests something like October 10, since it's about 60 days.
- **Gary Price:** French map that places Cherokee villages in 1716, recently discovered, but not in exhibits. During European contact didn't Virginia claim land very far west?
- **Buck:** mapmaking in that part of VA prior to 1753 can be vastly distorted. We can only rely on modern boundaries of Virginia.
- **Brandon Custalow:** Next VIAB meeting October 11 at 4 PM at Mechanicsville Library.
- **Jean:** Can make the VIAB meeting virtually.
- **Bill Hurd:** Ask that meeting with petitioner and workgroup be held before finalization of workgroup recommendation.
- **Buck:** should contact Secretary's office about how this meeting will work.

- Announcements and polling for next meeting

- **Next Meeting Monday, October 17 6-8 PM**

- Meeting adjourned 8:20 pm